

Ambrose Bierce

Quotes

*Men, Science, Food, Life, Art, Funny, Thinking, Cooking, Two, Country,
Sarcastic, World, Names, Animal, Hands, Christian, Nature, War, Character,
Time*

Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.

~Ambrose Bierce

The most affectionate creature in the world is a wet dog.

~Ambrose Bierce

War is God's way of teaching Americans geography.

~Ambrose Bierce

Mayonnaise: One of the sauces which serve the French in place of a state religion.

~Ambrose Bierce

In our civilization, and under our republican form of government, intelligence is so highly honored that it is rewarded by exemption from the cares of office.

~Ambrose Bierce

NEPOTISM, n. Appointing your grandmother to office for the good of the party.

~Ambrose Bierce

Admiral. That part of a warship which does the talking while the figurehead does the thinking.

~Ambrose Bierce

Spring beckons! All things to the call respond; the trees are leaving and cashiers abscond.

~Ambrose Bierce

Clairvoyant, n.: A person, commonly a woman, who has the power of seeing that which is invisible to her patron - namely, that he is a blockhead.

~Ambrose Bierce

Divorce: a resumption of diplomatic relations and rectification of boundaries.

~Ambrose Bierce

Politics: A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage.

~Ambrose Bierce

Witticism. A sharp and clever remark, usually quoted and seldom noted; what the Philistine is pleased to call a joke.

~Ambrose Bierce

An absolute monarchy is one in which the sovereign does as he pleases so long as he pleases the assassins.

~Ambrose Bierce

Democracy is four wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch.

~Ambrose Bierce

Education, n.: That which discloses to the wise and disguises from the foolish their lack of understanding.

~Ambrose Bierce

INGRATE, n. One who receives a benefit from another, or is otherwise an object of charity.

~Ambrose Bierce

Magpie, n.: A bird whose theivish disposition suggested to someone that it might be taught to talk.

~Ambrose Bierce

Clarinet n. An instrument of torture operated by a person with cotton in

his ears. There are two instruments worse than a clarinet - two clarinets.

~Ambrose Bierce

Impartial - unable to perceive any promise of personal advantage from espousing either side of a controversy.

~Ambrose Bierce

There are four kinds of Homicide: felonious, excusable, justifiable, and praiseworthy.

~Ambrose Bierce

PHRENOLOGY, n. The science of picking the pocket through the scalp. It consists in locating and exploiting the organ that one is a dupe with.

~Ambrose Bierce

HYDRA, n. A kind of animal that the ancients catalogued under many heads.

~Ambrose Bierce

Religion. A daughter of Hope and Fear, explaining to Ignorance the nature of the Unknowable.

~Ambrose Bierce

OATH, n. In law, a solemn appeal to the Deity, made binding upon the conscience by a penalty for perjury.

~Ambrose Bierce

GNU, n. An animal of South Africa, which in its domesticated state resembles a horse, a buffalo and a stag. In its wild condition it is something like a thunderbolt, an earthquake and a cyclone.

~Ambrose Bierce

TEETOTALER, n. One who abstains from strong drink, sometimes

totally, sometimes tolerably totally.

~Ambrose Bierce

PHYSIOGNOMY, n. The art of determining the character of another by the resemblances and differences between his face and our own, which is the standard of excellence.

~Ambrose Bierce

OYSTER, n. A slimy, gobby shellfish which civilization gives men the hardihood to eat without removing its entrails! The shells are sometimes given to the poor.

~Ambrose Bierce

ARSENIC, n. A kind of cosmetic greatly affected by the ladies, whom it greatly affects in turn.

~Ambrose Bierce

DELEGATION, n. In American politics, an article of merchandise that comes in sets.

~Ambrose Bierce

ULTIMATUM, n. In diplomacy, a last demand before resorting to concessions.

~Ambrose Bierce

REALISM, n. The art of depicting nature as it is seem by toads. The charm suffusing a landscape painted by a mole, or a story written by a measuring-worm.

~Ambrose Bierce

Sweater, n.: garment worn by child when its mother is feeling chilly.

~Ambrose Bierce

Conservative, n: A statesman who is enamored of existing evils, as

distinguished from the Liberal who wishes to replace them with others.

~Ambrose Bierce

Infidel, n. In New York, one who does not believe in the Christian religion; in Constantinople, one who does.

~Ambrose Bierce

POSITIVISM- A philosophy that denies our knowledge of the Real and affirms our ignorance of the Apparent. Its longest exponent is Comte, its broadest Mill and its thickest Spencer.

~Ambrose Bierce

Historian - a broad-gauge gossip.

~Ambrose Bierce

FLAG, n. A colored rag borne above troops and hoisted on forts and ships. It appears to serve the same purpose as certain signs that one sees and vacant lots in London

~Ambrose Bierce

APHORISM, n. Predigested wisdom.

~Ambrose Bierce

Birth: The first and direst of all disasters.

~Ambrose Bierce

PITY, n. A failing sense of exemption, inspired by contrast.

~Ambrose Bierce

PLATONIC, adj. Pertaining to the philosophy of Socrates. Platonic Love is a fool's name for the affection between a disability and a frost.

~Ambrose Bierce

Belladonna, n.: In Italian a beautiful lady; in English a deadly poison. A

striking example of the essential identity of the two tongues.

~Ambrose Bierce

SYCOPHANT- One who approaches Greatness on his belly so that he may not be commanded to turn and be kicked. He is sometimes an editor.

~Ambrose Bierce

Photograph: a picture painted by the sun without instruction in art.

~Ambrose Bierce

MONUMENT, n. A structure intended to commemorate something which either needs no commemoration or cannot be commemorated.

~Ambrose Bierce

ORATORY, n. A conspiracy between speech and action to cheat the understanding. A tyranny tempered by stenography.

~Ambrose Bierce

PESSIMISM- philosophy forced upon the convictions of the observer by the disheartening prevalence of the optimist with his scarecrow hope and his unsightly smile.

~Ambrose Bierce

APHORISM, n. Predigested wisdom. The flabby wine-skin of his brain
Yields to some pathologic strain, And voids from its unstored abysm
The driblet of an aphorism. "The Mad Philosopher," 1697

~Ambrose Bierce

OVATION, n. In ancient Rome, a definite, formal pageant in honor of one who had been disserviceable to the enemies of the nation. A lesser "triumph."

~Ambrose Bierce

GEOGRAPHER, n. A chap who can tell you offhand the difference between the outside of the world and the inside.

~Ambrose Bierce

LAST, n. A shoemaker's implement, named by a frowning Providence as opportunity to the maker of puns.

~Ambrose Bierce

MUMMY, n. - an ancient Egyptian handy, too, in museums in gratifying the vulgar curiosity that serves to distinguish man from the lower animals.

~Ambrose Bierce

HUMORIST, n. A plague that would have softened down the hoar austerity of Pharaoh's heart and persuaded him to dismiss Israel with his best wishes, cat-quick.

~Ambrose Bierce

MUSTANG, n. An indocile horse of the western plains. In English society, the American wife of an English nobleman.

~Ambrose Bierce

MISDEMEANOR, n. An infraction of the law having less dignity than a felony and constituting no claim to admittance into the best criminal society.

~Ambrose Bierce

Mad, adj. Affected with a high degree of intellectual independence.

~Ambrose Bierce

Habit: A shackle for the free.

~Ambrose Bierce

Future. That period of time in which our affairs prosper, our friends are

true and our happiness is assured.

~Ambrose Bierce

REFERENDUM, n. A law for submission of proposed legislation to a popular vote to learn the nonsensus of public opinion.

~Ambrose Bierce

Love: A temporary insanity curable by marriage.

~Ambrose Bierce

Lottery: A tax on people who are bad at math.

~Ambrose Bierce

Brain: an apparatus with which we think we think.

~Ambrose Bierce

Litigation: A machine which you go into as a pig and come out of as a sausage.

~Ambrose Bierce

A leech who, having penetrated the shell of a turtle only to find that the creature has long been dead, deems it expedient to form a new attachment to a fresh turtle.

~Ambrose Bierce

Logic: The art of thinking and reasoning in strict accordance with the limitations and incapacities of the human misunderstanding.

~Ambrose Bierce

Idiot, n. A member of a large and powerful tribe whose influence in human affairs has always been dominant and controlling.

~Ambrose Bierce

Dog - a kind of additional or subsidiary Deity designed to catch the

overflow and surplus of the world's worship.

~Ambrose Bierce

Forgetfulness - a gift of God bestowed upon debtors in compensation for their destitution of conscience.

~Ambrose Bierce

Patriotism is as fierce as a fever, pitiless as the grave, blind as a stone, and irrational as a headless hen.

~Ambrose Bierce

Debt, n. An ingenious substitute for the chain and whip of the slavedriver.

~Ambrose Bierce

Learning, n. The kind of ignorance distinguishing the studious.

~Ambrose Bierce

April fool, n. The March fool with another month added to his folly.

~Ambrose Bierce

Incompatibility. In matrimony a similarity of tastes, particularly the taste for domination.

~Ambrose Bierce

Corporation: An ingenious device for obtaining profit without individual responsibility.

~Ambrose Bierce

Bacchus, n.: A convenient deity invented by the ancients as an excuse for getting drunk.

~Ambrose Bierce

Contempt; the feeling of a prudent man for an enemy who is too

formidable safely to be opposed.

~Ambrose Bierce

HYENA, n. A beast held in reverence by some oriental nations from its habit of frequenting at night the burial-places of the dead. But the medical student does that

~Ambrose Bierce

PANTOMIME, n. A play in which the story is told without violence to the language. The least disagreeable form of dramatic action.

~Ambrose Bierce

Convent - a place of retirement for women who wish for leisure to meditate upon the sin of idleness.

~Ambrose Bierce

Riot - A popular entertainment given to the military by innocent bystanders.

~Ambrose Bierce

He who thinks with difficulty believes with alacrity.

~Ambrose Bierce

Irreligion - the principal one of the great faiths of the world.

~Ambrose Bierce

PIRACY, n. Commerce without its folly-swaddles, just as God made it.

~Ambrose Bierce

KILT, n. A costume sometimes worn by Scotchmen in America and Americans in Scotland.

~Ambrose Bierce

CRAYFISH, n. A small crustacean very much resembling the lobster,

but less indigestible.

~Ambrose Bierce

Marriage, n: the state or condition of a community consisting of a master, a mistress, and two slaves, making in all, two.

~Ambrose Bierce

ORPHAN, n. A living person whom death has deprived of the power of filial ingratitude . . .

~Ambrose Bierce

Cabbage: a familiar kitchen-garden vegetable about as large and wise as a man's head.

~Ambrose Bierce

Perseverance - a lowly virtue whereby mediocrity achieves an inglorious success.

~Ambrose Bierce

Respectability, n. The offspring of a liaison between a bald head and a bank account.

~Ambrose Bierce

Gout, a physician's name for the rheumatism of a rich patient

~Ambrose Bierce

A miracle is an act or event out of the order of nature and unaccountable, as beating a normal hand of four kings and an ace with four aces and a king.

~Ambrose Bierce

GUNPOWDER, n. An agency employed by civilized nations for the settlement of disputes which might become troublesome if left unadjusted.

~Ambrose Bierce

A revolution is a violent change of mismanagement.

~Ambrose Bierce

Philosophy: A route of many roads leading from nowhere to nothing.

~Ambrose Bierce

Life - a spiritual pickle preserving the body from decay.

~Ambrose Bierce

Friendless. Having no favors to bestow. Destitute of fortune. Addicted to utterance of truth and common sense.

~Ambrose Bierce

Ambition. An overmastering desire to be vilified by enemies while living and made ridiculous by friends when dead.

~Ambrose Bierce

International arbitration may be defined as the substitution of many burning questions for a smoldering one

~Ambrose Bierce

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